# CHAPTER 4  APPROVAL & PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

All documents referred to within this chapter are available via the Sharepoint Site: [https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/Chapter%204%20-%20Approval%20Professional%20Accreditation](https://studentmailuwsac.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityHandbook2021-22/Shared%20Documents/Chapter%204%20-%20Approval%20Professional%20Accreditation)

### NOTE FOR 2022/23 - UWS STRATEGY 2025 & THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

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1. INITIAL CONCEPT
Programme Leader Designate (PLD), has concept for new programme / is approached to develop a programme

2. IDEA CONSIDERED
Initial idea paper is considered by School for fit with School priorities/ operational planning

3. PROPOSAL
If approved to progress, PLD completes New Programme Proposal (NPP) in collaboration with Business Partners and Stakeholders

4. SCHOOL APPROVAL
NPP is scrutinised by School Board. If approved, NPP is signed off by Dean of School

5. NPP SUBMISSION
Form is submitted for review to Portfolio Advisory Group chaired by Deputy Principal

6. MILESTONES
If NPP is approved, drafting team identify appropriate date for approval and develop a milestones document

7. PANEL NOMINATIONS
PLD provides School with nomination forms for the external panel members at least 6 weeks before the event

8. WORKSHOPS
Drafting team produces documentation in consultation with stakeholders. MUST include collaboration with Learning Transformations and business partners.

9. SCHOOL SCRUTINY
Documentation checked for accuracy, currency, appropriate LO's and compliance. Mock panel could be utilised

10. REVISIONS
Revisions to documentation made. Briefing pack and documentation are sent to Panel who are invited to provide Initial comments

11. PRE-EVENT MEETING
PLD meets with Chair of Panel to discuss format of event and any feedback received from Panel

12. APPROVAL EVENT
Panel has authority to approve new programmes / title or to suspend /adjourn the event if serious concerns emerge

13. REPORT
Report is prepared by the School and approved by the Chair, Panel and PLD

14. RESPONSE TO REPORT
PLD submits response to the report (to Chair) confirming how any conditions have been met along with any revised materials

15. WIDER COMMUNICATION
Once any conditions have been confirmed as met, School communicates programme details to University Professional Support Departments

16. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT
Programme is entered into system. Drafting team prepare programme for delivery. Recruitment begins
NOTE FOR 2022/23 - UWS STRATEGY 2025 & THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In Term 2 of academic year 2019/20, UWS launched its new ambitious forward-looking strategy. The UWS Strategy 2025 lays out an agenda for educational innovation and excellence that comprise six broad objectives:

1. Our portfolio of courses is contemporary, relevant, sustainable, and allow students to thrive in the rapidly-changing 21st century workplace.

2. The delivery modes of our programmes of study are flexible, and student-centred, allowing students to manage the mode, intensity and duration of study. All have hybrid delivery options.

3. Our online and physical learning environments are dynamic, technology-rich and support world-class pedagogy.

4. Students are at the heart of what we do. The UWS student journey is personal, seamless, and supported by outstanding professional and academic staff and functional, student-centred and user-friendly systems and processes.

5. Our graduates are leaders, with world-ready, interdisciplinary meta-skills and flexible, global perspectives.

6. Our talented academics employ innovative, student-centred, teaching and learning practice and engage in continuing professional development in pedagogy, digital learning innovation and student support.

Key to the achievement of these objectives is an underpinning approach to curriculum design and teaching delivery. The UWS Curriculum Framework adopts the following curriculum design principles:

- Flexible and hybrid, using best-in-class technologies and pedagogies, meeting the learning needs of students in contemporary Scotland;
- Simple and coherent, providing carefully-designed linear pathways for students whether part-time or full-time; on-campus or online, starting in first year or joining at any time in their degree pathway;
- Student-centred, thus designed to meet the diverse needs of the distinctive UWS student cohorts, using a flexible and agile approach to curriculum that responds better to the needs of each student and considers and seeks to impact positively on the wellbeing of all students;
- Authentic, using real-world learning activities and assessments to best prepare students for the complex and ever-changing professional world and society in which they live and work;
- Inclusive, recognising the diversity of the student body, and the need to be accessible to all.
- Sustainable, with efficient structures, pathways and number of modules.

This framework will be applied to PGT and UGT programmes and phased in by Schools from 2020/21 onwards as part of a phased implementation within the UWS Student Experience Programme (workstream 1: portfolio renewal), with full implementation achieved by 23/24.
Whilst these principles should inform **all programme design** at UWS there may be occasions where a PSRB requires a different approach in order to secure accreditation or formal recognition. This framework encourages collaborative, partnership working with PSRBs to identify solutions and work together to provide robust and authentic programmes that meet the needs of students, industry, and the ethos of the University.

Supporting guidance in terms of addressing elements of the CF exists in the form of a **CF Alignment Document** (LINK) is available to assist teams.

The **UWS Curriculum Framework 2022** - LINK is a key component of the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan and the Student Experience Programme through which the plan will be implemented. It is intended that all provision will be aligned to the CF by end of 2023/24; with teams using varying methodology to align to the CF, some of which will use the programme amendment or programme approval processes outlined within this chapter.
1  APPROVAL OF NEW OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDESIGNED PROGRAMMES

Introduction
One of the key ways in which institutions demonstrate their responsibilities for standards and quality is through the procedures for curriculum design, programme approval and programme monitoring and review.

Initial Concept
New programme proposals should be developed in line with school strategic plans, the University Strategy and the plans and frameworks which underpin it. An initial idea paper should be raised at the Divisional Programme Board before the plan is discussed at the School Board. If other Schools are to be involved in the delivery of the proposed provision then it is important for all relevant programme teams to be involved in the initial consideration of the provision.

New Programme Proposal
When proposing a new programme, schools should complete the New Programme Proposal form available on Sharepoint. This form is designed to ensure proposals are based on a robust business case and the development is supported by and completed in partnership with relevant professional services. It requires a detailed, evidenced-based business case to be presented with input from several areas of professional services. The form has been created to ensure that the development and assessment of new programme proposals is:

- Evidence-based: developed in an evidence-based manner to produce a clear rationale with consideration of areas including existing programme health data, indicators of viability, reflection on similar provision at other Higher Education Providers (HEP) and identification of Unique Selling Points (USP), and resources required;
- Transparent: decision making will be cross-school through NPP subgroup (Portfolio Advisory Group)
- Collaborative: Consultation with professional services is initiated at the outset of the proposal and continued throughout the process to approval stage.

This form should be used for all new named awards both of the University and potential validated programme developments.

Consultation
The NPP form must be completed in collaboration with the relevant professional services teams providing support, guidance, oversight and transparency of the programme portfolio. Drafting Teams are advised to engage with the following areas in developing their proposal:
External Stakeholders
Programme teams are encouraged to reflect on who the key stakeholders for the programme might be and utilise the best approach for engaging them in the process of design, review and approval. These stakeholders might include potential employers, placement providers and service users. They provide a useful indicator of how successful a programme is likely to be and whether the interest is sustainable or will be transient. They are also key in identifying CPD opportunities. Common practice within the sector involves establishing and engaging with Industry Advisory Boards. These can be formally or informally organised, to discuss programme developments at key stages during the design and approval process; liaising with professional body contacts and education teams to consider alignment to professional standards or requirements.

Students
Current students offer a barometer on what currently works well and what they would look for in a new programme. Guiding Principle 4 of the UK Quality Code on Course Design and Development expects providers to engage with students in the design, development and approval of programmes and Schools should ensure that the student voice is actively represented. Schools should consult with current students and alumni where possible. Programme teams should reflect on and be able to respond to questions on what contribution students have made to the design and development of their programme(s).

Widening Participation (Student Recruitment)
If the proposed programme has been developed to offer an articulation route from colleges (or could potentially be developed for this purpose), the expertise of Marketing and Student Recruitment is invaluable in managing this relationship and understanding the requirements of creating partnerships.

International Centre
The International Centre are integral in developing international articulation partnerships to recruit international students and build up UWS branding overseas through partnership. The IC can assist by highlighting international opportunities through market identification and development, and by identifying opportunities for all students to have an international experience during the course of their studies by managing Study Abroad and Exchange programmes.

International students
Where the proposed cohort for the new programme will include Tier 4 (non-EEA) students, Teams should ensure the student journey will comply with UKVI definitions of full time study. Further guidance can be provided by colleagues in Marketing and Student Recruitment.

Marketing
The University’s Marketing and Communications department provides professional marketing advice to colleagues across the institution. Currently their input does not extend to market research, although they can signpost to available third-party providers and have provided a Quick Market Research Approaches Guide.
**Finance**

Business Partners can assist in completing the Finance Costing Model for the proposed programme, provide information on student fees and highlight areas that the drafting team may not have considered.

**Library**

Drafting teams are also encouraged to speak to the relevant Subject Librarian to discuss reading resources, journals and other relevant support texts. For programmes starting in September, the library requires to know of additional resource requirements by the end of February of the previous session. If additional library resources are required, drafting teams should ensure licensing and maintenance costs have been factored in to costing model.

**Information Technology**

If there are additional IT resources needed to support the provision, the drafting team should also liaise with Information Technology (IT) to highlight the need for specific software, hardware or other facilities, or any need to increase the number of licenses held, to ensure this new provision can be supported and funded.

**QuEST**

If drafting teams are daring to be different, a discussion with QuEST will establish what regulatory areas they may need to consider in offering an academically robust yet innovative programme. They can also offer expert advice on collaborative partnerships from franchise to validated models.

**Centre for Learning Transformation, Innovation & Environments**

This new department supports academic colleagues by offering advice on best practice in curriculum development, change, innovation and hybrid learning. It offers continuous professional development programmes for new and existing colleagues. Within this department, the Learning Technologists are experts in designing and delivering enhancements in learning environments. In addition to bringing new ideas, approaches, and technologies, the team will also provide the ‘building blocks’ of digital education by providing a range of workshops and self-paced resources on ‘how to’ for those who teach.

**Supporting Documentation**

To assist the schools in producing their proposals, the SharePoint for this chapter has the following support information:

- **NPP – Programme Approvals Ready Reckoner Flowchart** This spreadsheet-based decision maker enables the user to determine a timeline from concept to launch of a new programme.

- **Finance Costing Model** Referred to in the NPP Form, this spreadsheet allows programme teams to calculate the likely cost of initial set-up and running costs for programmes. It should be submitted alongside the NPP form.
NPP Flow Diagram (Process from Programme Conception to Approval) This document shows the process from concept to launch. A copy appears at the start of this chapter.

NPP – Quick Market Research Approaches Referred to in the NPP Form, this is guidance from UWS Marketing that programme teams can use to assist in self-directed market research.

Programme Scrutiny Checklist This revised checklist whilst lengthy, addresses the typical requirements of a successful approval.

The supporting documentation is crucial in assisting schools in understanding the effort required to bring forward a new programme. Whilst it is entirely feasible to bring forward a programme in very short timescales, there will be implications on the scale of marketing and resources available. For example, to have a presence in the Undergraduate Prospectus, the programme must be approved by June of the previous year. However, should the programme only require a web presence, turnaround can be as little as a few days depending on the complexity of the request. Schools should be cognisant of the timescales required by supporting departments when proposing new programmes.

Approval of New Programme Proposals

It is expected that all NPPs are presented as part of operational planning on an annual basis. However, NPPs can and will be accepted at any point in the academic year. For proposals outside of Operational Planning, once the School Board is satisfied with the proposal it will be forwarded to the Secretary to the Portfolio Advisory Group (See Senate Committees for further information) for consideration at the next meeting. This sub-committee of EAC is chaired by the Deputy Principal, meets at least three times a year and is composed of Deans of School and key colleagues from Professional Services. The group reports to EAC which provides final authorisation of the new programme proposals to proceed to approval on behalf of Senate. Summary reports are provided to Vice Chancellor’s Executive Group (VCEG) to highlight key portfolio recommendations and to enable members of VCEG to have strategic oversight of portfolio developments.

The Approval Process

The model for programme approval firmly places ownership and responsibility for development of new provision and associated documentation with drafting teams. Final approval rests with Senate in line with the advice and guidance within UK Quality Code for Higher Education which recommends that ownership and oversight of the approval processes should be the responsibility of a senior academic committee. Senate has vested in the Approval Panel the authority to approve programmes.

The University’s criteria for approval, below, are informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. (See www.qaa.ac.uk for more information.) Approval mechanisms have been designed to incorporate the Advice and Guidance from the relevant sections of the revised UK Quality Code.
a) Schools are responsible for the consideration of proposed new programmes/amendments to existing programmes and for submitting these to Portfolio Advisory Group.

b) Once confirmed by the Portfolio Advisory Group to proceed to an approval event, the School will be responsible for organising the event.

c) An approval event MAY also be required where:

- It is an outcome of Institution-Led Review (ILR);
- **More than 30-credits of core provision at any level of the programme have been amended or replaced via the programme amendment process.** This is to safeguard the integrity of the level outcomes and associated awards of the University. The Divisional Programme Board should always consider the impact on programme specifications where modules are amended or replaced. Any greater volume of change to modules or level outcomes as identified above will require a full re-approval event;
- Significant changes are being proposed to an existing programme, e.g. change of title, the addition of new modes of delivery including blended, online and face to face, schedule of delivery, or the addition of an Honours level.

**Contact colleagues in QuEST for further advice.**

**Scheduling**

All new programmes/titles will be considered at an approval event by a panel acting on behalf of Education Advisory Committee (EAC) and including external peers. The approval of programmes should normally take place between October and March to ensure that programme data is confirmed by the University deadline of 31 March. This deadline ensures that the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) can be advised in good time, programme marketing put in place and programme information added to the Banner student record system and the **Programme Specification and Module Descriptor** (PSMD) catalogue.

The majority of events will be contained within one working day. It may also be possible to group related new programmes into one event. Approval events will normally be held online or at the campus where the programme will run. At the event, panel members have the opportunity to meet formally with senior staff of the University, usually the Dean of School, Deputy Dean and Programme Leaders, review relevant learning resources and staff concerned with the programme. Panel members welcome the opportunity to meet with students from existing programmes where this is relevant.

**2 PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT**

Senate has confirmed the importance of a strong focus on programme development through the front loading of consultation and engagement with Professional Services, employers and individual representatives, students/graduates and Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) (if appropriate). A key stage in programme development is the establishment of drafting teams which included consultation and
engagement with the key stakeholders, employers / industry representatives, students and Professional Services. The Approval Panel will seek assurance that the above have taken place and may wish to see evidence of how this has informed the development of the proposal.

**The Drafting Team**

The prime responsibility for the quality of new programmes lies with the drafting team. It is the responsibility of the School to appoint a Programme Leader / Programme Leader Designate and drafting team to prepare programme documentation. Careful consideration should be given to the criteria for programme approval, Programme Scrutiny Checklist and the **UK Quality Code for Higher Education** when drafting programme approval documents.

Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments are available to assist in the drafting of various aspects of new programme documents including curriculum design and developments, drafting of learning outcomes, embedding employability, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) / Online developments, Personal Development Planning (PDP) process and alignment with the **Curriculum Framework**. Separate Curriculum Design guidance is available via Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments. Teams should engage with Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments early in the programme development process to benefit from expertise in curriculum development, change, innovation and hybrid learning.

Schools should put in place support for academic staff developing new programmes who require mentoring, monitor developments and offer support to the drafting team.

Deans of School are accountable for ensuring programmes are presented in time for the agreed deadlines and that documentation, particularly learning outcomes, have been scrutinised well in advance of the deadline for circulation to the panel.

**Drafting Team Membership**

Drafting teams should include representation from colleagues from relevant Professional Services, for example, Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments, Information, Technology (IT), Student Life and Library. There should also be involvement from professional/industrial colleagues on the programme development activities. Employer and PSRB input to curriculum design and other relevant benchmarking should be evident.

The experience of approval events at UWS is that it is of more benefit to have employer and industry involvement in the development of the programme rather than
at the end of the process as a panel member. If the drafting teams can evidence their engagement with employers and industry as part of the pre-event activities, then an industrial representative would not be required on Approval Panels unless requested specifically by the School/accrediting body or PSRB.

**Student Engagement in Approval Process**

As part of the University system for the approval of new programmes, students should be consulted to ascertain their views on the new programme / programme amendment, its structure and the proposed learning, teaching and assessment methods.

Schools should make arrangements in good time to include engagement with students during the drafting process. Graduates can also provide useful input.

It is acknowledged that it can be difficult to seek students’ views for completely new programmes and subject areas, nevertheless, due consideration should be given to the student view for any new addition to the School’s portfolio. The drafting team are encouraged to facilitate feedback through Student/Staff Liaison Groups (SSLG), Divisional Programme Boards, cohort consultation meetings (including via VLE / video conferencing), wider student and alumni focus groups, individual engagement through systematic inclusion of students as members of design teams for new and existing programme developments, and through the systematic use of student feedback data. It is also good practice to include them on approval panels and review boards.

When approving significant amendments/additions to an existing programme, for example the addition of an Honours level, students on the existing programme will be invited to meet with the panel to provide their opinion on the proposed development and the implications for the student experience.

Where students participate in the programme approval process, this can be recorded in their Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) and the HEAR Activity Report Form is signed off by a member of QuEST.

**CASE STUDY:**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN APPROVALS OF UNDERGRADUATE Provision**

Prior to the approval event, students were engaged in co-creator focus group sessions where existing cohorts of students from all demographics talked openly about a range of issues including contact hours, assessment and assessment types. It became apparent from these meetings that students were keen to experience a mix of traditional and innovative learning and teaching approaches.

The feedback from these sessions informed the programme team’s approach to the redevelopment of the undergraduate provision and led to the development of more choice in option modules, including greater use of 10 credit modules. It was hypothesised that these smaller modules would improve progression and retention as students would gain a sense of achievement over less time than the traditional 20 credit module.

Students involved in these sessions were subsequently invited to present at the approval event. The input from students set a very positive tone and provided a genuine flavour for the panel of the business student at UWS. The student input had created an inspiring atmosphere.

Post-approval communications with the students had shown that they had valued being involved in shaping the future of the programme.
The Approval Process

The approval process is organised by the School in consultation with the Programme Leader.

STEP ONE
If programme/title is approved by Portfolio Advisory Group, the Programme Leader is informed. Guidance on the production of the approval documentation will be provided by EQO. The proposed date for the event should be identified and a timescale plan of milestones is developed (template available on Sharepoint).

STEP TWO
The Programme Leader provides the School with nomination forms for the external panel members at least 6 weeks before the event. (Second choices should also be provided.)

STEP THREE
Drafting team (in consultation from stakeholders) produces the documentation in accordance with the guidance provided in this handbook.

STEP FOUR
Final School Scrutiny takes place at least 4 weeks prior to the event to allow for final amendments prior to the panel paperwork being circulated. A report of the event should be completed. The Dean of School signs off the final documents before they are forwarded to the panel.

STEP FIVE
EQO compiles and sends briefing pack out to the panel with the approval documentation and Scrutiny report – at least 2 weeks prior to the event. Timetable and panel membership is sent to Programme Leader to disseminate to the Programme Team. EQO organises a briefing meeting with the Panel Chair and Programme Leader in the week prior to the event to review comments from the panel and discuss the final timetable for the event.

STEP SIX
The Panel has the authority to approve new programmes/titles or to suspend/adjourn the event if serious concerns emerge.

The panel delivers conclusions and recommendations at the end of the event. A conclusions memo is completed by the EQO and circulated the day after the event to allow the team to start addressing any conditions or recommendations.

STEP SEVEN
EQO / nominee prepares report of the event to be approved by the Chair, Panel, and Programme Leader. The report covers the issues discussed during the event and confirms the programme title, structure and delivery methods, and highlights any conditions/recommendation/observations. This report is sent to the Programme Leader within five working days of the event.

STEP EIGHT
Programme Leader submits a response to the report on behalf of the drafting team and School confirming how the conditions have been met along with any revised materials, i.e. programme specification, PDDP, module descriptors as appropriate.

STEP NINE
The full panel or subset as determined at the event will review the response and revised material and confirm that the conditions have been met.

STEP TEN
EQO will confirm to Registry, Marketing and Student Recruitment, QuEST, Finance, Strategic Planning and IT (specifically the Banner team) that the award has been approved and confirm the title and delivery routes including campus.

STEP ELEVEN
The report is submitted to the School Board for review. The School Board will report any significant issues to Senate.

STEP TWELVE
The detailed points in the report should be considered by the next meeting of the School Board / Divisional Board and form part of annual monitoring.
For more information on any stage of approval process, please contact your EQO.

**Responsibilities of the Programme Leader**

Programme Leaders are responsible for providing nominations for external panel members to the Dean of School as soon as possible after the Portfolio Advisory Group authorisation is received.

Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the documentation is prepared in line with the requirements of this handbook and relevant external organisations (such as PSRB or UKVI), submitted for scrutiny, and printed in sufficient quantities to supply the panel, programme team and the relevant Dean of School and the EQO. The Dean of School is responsible for confirming the quality of the final version of the document and fit with University Regulations and Curriculum Framework before it is forwarded to the panel not less than two weeks before the event. Where panel members have a complaint about the process it is usually that insufficient time has been allocated for reading the documentation and preparing for the event, so if documents are not submitted in time to allow two clear weeks for reading, the event is likely to be cancelled.

The Programme Leader is supplied with copies of all the briefing information sent to the panel by the EQO and is responsible for circulating these to the programme team for information.

The Programme Leader is responsible for identifying and inviting the appropriate members of teaching staff and students (if there is a related existing programme) and others to the event and advising them of the times of appropriate meetings. The programme team should include the programme and subject leaders and should cover all the specialist areas taught.

In making the arrangements for the event, the EQO will normally liaise directly with the Programme Leader who should ensure that the Dean and Deputy Dean are fully appraised of all arrangements.

**Multi-location Delivery of a Programme**

Individual programmes can be delivered across multiple locations; the panel will consider this as part of their discussions around the student experience. The programme specification and prospectus should make explicit the delivery approaches for each programme, with a more detailed breakdown provided for the panel to consider. This detailed breakdown should also be included in the student handbook.

Whilst teams can develop programmes for delivery across multiple locations it is important for students to be associated with a single campus for programme management purposes. The importance of clear information in the programme specification and prospectus is vital to allow Schools to manage student expectations. Detailed information on programme delivery is to be made available to students in advance of enrolment.
3 DOCUMENTATION FOR PROGRAMME APPROVAL

Introduction

There are a number of documents required in the programme approval process:

- Programme Design and Development Plan (PDDP);
- Programme Specification(s);
- Module Descriptors;
- Report from the Final School Scrutiny;
- Specific documentation to satisfy the requirements of PSRBs.

Programme specifications and module descriptors should be completed online via PSMD [http://psmd.staff.uws.ac.uk/](http://psmd.staff.uws.ac.uk/) (requires VPN access). Exceptionally, (for example where the programme is being developed with a partner who does not have access to PSMD), teams may use the templates available on the Sharepoint site.

These documents are detailed on the following pages.

The panel will also be provided with the most recent appropriate Institution-Led Review report.

The School should ensure that:

- the documents are fully subject to a scrutiny process and signed off by the Dean of School;
- all documents are page numbered and include a contents page;
- a final proof check for typographical and spelling errors has taken place prior to printing;
- each document has a front cover with the following information included - University logo, name of the document, title(s) of the award(s) including single/major/joint/minor, name of School and the date of the event;
- watermarks do not appear on the documentation as this can interfere with the recipient’s ability to read the text;
- the Programme Leader has provided the EQO with an appropriate number of hard copies of materials for the panel in line with timescales.

Circulation to the Panel

The EQO will ensure a briefing pack for all panel members is circulated which will include:

- An event programme;
• Panel membership;
• A briefing note for panel members;
• Background information on UWS;
• Expenses claim information;
• A campus map (if appropriate).

Programme Design & Development Plan (PDDP)

The PDDP describes how the proposed programme is to be introduced and developed to enable the panel to fully understand the drafting team’s intention and how the provision links to aspirations of the UWS Strategy. The programme specification is incorporated within this document.

The following information should be included within all PDDP documents:

• The standard front page;
• A programme structure table for each title outlining full and part-time journeys as appropriate and in line with UKVI requirements as necessary;
• Rationale for the title and level of the programme, with reference to the subject benchmark statement and the market for the award. The title should be consistent with University Regulations (Chapter 1), UWS Awards and SCQF, in that the name given to any qualification should represent appropriately the level of achievement, reflect accurately the field(s) of study, and not be misleading;
• Confirmation and evidence that the proposal has taken full account of the UWS Strategy, Curriculum Framework, Thematic Plans, Regulatory Framework, Quality Handbook, Assessment Handbook, Graduate Attributes and relevant UWS policies, e.g. Copyright; Code of Ethics
• Confirmation of the use of external reference points including Benchmark Statements, PSRB requirements, employer and graduate feedback;
• Delivery approaches including blended learning and single cohort delivery on multiple locations;
• A matrix to show the mapping of module outcomes and content to the programme learning outcomes should be included in the documentation;
• A mapping of assessments to ensure that assessment load has been considered and mitigated against;
• Information relating to resources such as physical and lab space, equipment and consumables, the library and computing facilities;
• Where a programme is to be offered at more than one campus or mode of delivery, the PDDP should articulate how the equivalence of student experience would be managed;
• Inclusivity in the curriculum;
• Internationalisation of the curriculum;
• Reflection on ethical issues within the curriculum;
• Management of the student experience including references to annual monitoring, student feedback opportunities and the specific needs of part-time/online blended learning. Arrangements and support for direct entrants via RPL/admission requirements;
• Staff CVs / Pure Profiles.

Presentation to the Panel
Each event will start with a meet and greet to allow the panel to meet the Programme Leader and drafting team over coffee before the event commences formally. Following on from the meet and greet there should be a presentation by the School to provide a clear introduction to the proposal and focus the panel onto the development. If the presentation covered the following issues it would remove the need for them to be covered explicitly in the PDDP:

• Background to the development;
• Introduction to the Drafting Team;
• Programme development activities (stakeholder & student engagement);
• Staff expertise and resourcing;
• Research underpinning strategy;
• Student support and guidance;
• Future Plan and 5 Year Development;
• Link to the UWS Strategy and Curriculum Framework

Following the presentation the panel will be invited to ask any questions or discuss what they had heard from the School.

The programme for each event will provide an outline of what issues would be considered at each meeting to allow the School to ensure appropriate attendance and representation.

Programme Specifications
Programme specifications are required for all programmes and titles of the University.

Teams should note that the programme specifications will be public documents made available to potential students, employers and other stakeholders via PSMD. It is imperative that Programme Specifications and linked documentation complies with the Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers. The Legal team have created this helpful guide to CMA and material changes.

Exit awards (CertHE/DipHE/Degree/Grad Cert/Grad Dip/PgC/PgD) may be included in the programme specification for the higher level award but learning outcomes should be delineated for each award.
Learning outcomes for each title and each award should be explicit, clearly articulated and distinct.

The programme specification will contain detailed information on:

- Admissions requirements;
- Teaching, learning & assessment approach;
- Employability, Graduate Attributes and PDP;
- Work Based Learning (WBL)/ Placement opportunities;
- Engagement and Attendance;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- Pointers to further study.

Teams are reminded of the importance of the specifications containing detailed accurate information on the above as this will no longer be addressed in the PDDP.

Guidance on Programme Specifications

- All programme specifications for Honours programmes should make reference to the appropriate Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark (see QAA website for most recent version);
- Schools should ensure that Programme Specifications are explicit with regards to progression and award criteria including any fall-back awards available. This is particularly pertinent given the future further automation of assessment boards;
- Cognisance should be taken of the SCQF, with particular attention to Level Descriptors, which set out the characteristic outcomes, which would be expected to be found at each level of study;
- Academic support for developing all areas of the Programme Specification including the wording of level specific learning outcomes is available from Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments;
- Further guidance on completing PSMD, can be found on the Sharepoint/Teams page. For training, please contact ICT.Training@uws.ac.uk

Module Descriptors

Module descriptors should be included as part of the programme approval documentation in a separate bound document. This includes existing and new modules. The drafting of all modules should be completed via PSMD. It is not necessary to include all option modules open to prospective students, although recommended option modules should be included. Others should be available if requested by the panel.
The panel will review the core modules for the title/programme, both existing and new modules. New modules should be considered by the Divisional Programme Board before the event. The panel will provide the required external input.

**Guidance on Presentation of Module Descriptors in Programme Approval Documentation**

To enable the panel to easily navigate through the module descriptors submitted for approval it is recommended that:

- The modules be ordered by level and then by core/option. It would also be useful if any new modules could be easily identified either by making bold or underlining the titles;
- The learning outcomes stated in the module descriptors are appropriate for the level of the programme and in keeping with the expectations of the SCQF and include all exit awards;
- Programme teams should consider carefully the use of pre-requisites within their programme structure and module specifications as this can prevent student progression;
- References and reading lists are up to date;
- Academic support for developing all areas of the module descriptor including the wording of Learning Outcomes is available from Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments.

**Module Descriptors – Assessment Detail**

To ensure that module descriptors are responsive to change, it is recommended that the detail on assessment is kept **minimal** and that the specific assignments are detailed in the module handbooks. As module handbooks are understandably not usually available for approval events, this can make the process of understanding the assessment strategy difficult for panels. It is therefore recommended that a **summary of the assessments** is provided for panel members separate from the module descriptor.

For example,

- What is the balance of formative and summative assessment?
- How will formative assessment take place?
- What kinds of summative assessments will students encounter on the module (written? practical? presentation? project? individual? group?) and why are these assessments the ones that are used?
- Is assessment staggered across the module’s delivery, or does it all take place towards the end?
- How will assessments support the learning that takes place within the module?
- What innovative or novel types of assessment are being used within the module?
• If your module offers choice of assessment, how is parity assured? Are the marking rubrics available for scrutiny by the panel?

Whilst it is recommended that module descriptors do not detail the assessment, if the module descriptor simply states “Assignment 1”, it is difficult for the panel to establish what and how the assessment enables the student to meet the learning outcomes. Therefore, within the descriptor there should be some detail, but not enough to make the module static, e.g. you might specify “essay of 2000 words”, but not the specific essay question. It can be helpful to provide an example of a module handbook to reassure the panel that students are provided with appropriately detailed information.

**School Scrutiny**

All programme documentation will be subject to scrutiny before being circulated to the panel. It is recommended that continual scrutiny occurs during the different phases of programme development and a final scrutiny should take place at least four weeks before the event to allow for timely circulation to the panel. The importance of timely, effective scrutiny should not be underestimated. It is recommended that a final scrutiny event is chaired by a senior member of the School and that the Programme Leader, drafting team, academics from outside of the immediate drafting team and other staff from within the School as appropriate are invited to attend. The EQO will attend the scrutiny meeting to advise on regulatory matters and will write a report documenting the revised requirements prior to the approval event.

Schools are responsible for the **completeness, accuracy, integrity** and **quality of programme documentation**. Schools are urged to take advice from the range of support services available on early drafts of documentation and use the Programme Scrutiny Checklist to guide their developments. If final scrutiny raises any reservations about the proposal proceeding at this stage these should be raised immediately with the Head of QuEST via the Deputy Dean or EQO in order that a decision can be taken as to whether the event should be postponed. Deans of Schools are responsible for signing off the documentation before despatch to the panel and for confirming resources and academic planning within Schools are in place as required to support the new programme and that the School is satisfied with the quality of the submission.

The [Programme Scrutiny Checklist](#) is available to assist programme teams in meeting the typical requirements for an approval event. It is recommended that this is used early in the programme development in addition to the [Criteria for Programme Approval](#). Recent thematic reviews of programme approvals have highlighted that the majority of conditions resulting from events relate to documentation revisions.

A copy of the scrutiny report should be made available for the panel to review.
4 PROGRAMME APPROVAL EVENTS

Panel Membership

The panel is convened by the School on behalf of Senate and is usually chaired by a senior academic member of University staff. Internal members (University staff) are not normally specialists in the discipline under consideration but will usually have experience of programme approval and quality assurance systems. The panel will normally comprise two externals (two academics) and three internals including the Chair. A member of QuEST will be present to advise on regulations and the academic infrastructure. There may be different panels for events that include professional body accreditation.

External members are invited to participate on the basis of their subject expertise as an academic or professional. There should normally be a minimum of two externals though the School or professional body may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms brought forward for approval.

The Programme Leader is asked to make external nominations to the panel using pro formas at least six weeks in advance of the event. Second choices should also be identified. If nominations are not submitted by this deadline, the event may be cancelled. There is no honorarium for panel members but expenses are covered and overnight accommodation can be provided.

While existing External Examiners may make helpful comments at various stages of curriculum design and review, they may not be involved as members of Approval Panels.

The panel membership is balanced to reflect the nature and objectives of the event and the characteristics of the programme.

Panel members require to receive the full programme documentation, an outline programme and briefing notes three weeks in advance of the visit. They are invited to highlight issues to be raised during the event in advance to assist the Chair in preparing for the event.

Format of the Event

Approval events are normally held over a full day (e.g. 9.30am to 4.00pm) to give the panel appropriate time to meet with senior staff, to hold discussions with the programme team, review the facilities and possibly meet with students and other stakeholders.

There are some events where it may be appropriate to hold a half day event. This would usually be considered for awards where the panel was considering six modules or less such as:

- addition of an honours level;
- graduate certificate or diploma award;
- postgraduate certificate or diploma award.
However, if the provision constitutes a new subject area for the institution then this would still normally require a full day event.

The length of the event and timing may also be influenced by the requirements of any professional and accrediting bodies involved in the approval.

Criteria for Appointment of Panel Chairs

The Chair of the panel has a key role in managing the agenda for the day, directing questions and ensuring all members of the panel have the opportunity to participate fully in discussions.

Consequently, there are certain minimum criteria which Senate would normally expect to be satisfied by panel chairs. Chairs will normally be able to demonstrate at least two of the following characteristics:

1. Be a member of EAC and therefore conversant with the national and internal policies and activities supporting the enhancement-led agenda;
2. Have experience as a University Programme Leader who has taken one or more programmes through the approval process;
3. Be a trained QAA or PSRB Reviewer;
4. Be a Dean, Deputy Dean, Divisional Programme Board Chair or Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of Scotland, or a Director or Deputy Director or Head of a Professional Service Department.

All panel chairs will be expected to participate in the training event provided by QuESt before chairing an event for the first time.

Criteria for Appointment of External Panel Members

Nominations for external panel members should be submitted to the School at the earliest opportunity to ensure that availability of first choice externals is maximised. There should normally be a minimum of two externals, though the School or professional body may request additional panel members to cover the specialisms brought forward for approval. The School should scrutinise the nominations proposed by the programme team, taking into account the following:

- It may be prudent not to choose someone from a close or competitor institution;
- The full breadth of the programme’s provision must be covered by the externals;
- At least one external panel member should have experience of programme development and leadership in HE;
- Engagement with an AdvanceHE Subject Centre and/or QAA Subject Benchmarking activity would be an advantage.

Once external panel members are identified, the programme team should not consult with them. The EQO or nominee will be responsible for inviting external panel members to be involved in the approval event.
Those precluded from the nomination process include honorary professors, visiting lecturers, Recognised Teachers of the University (RTU), or any person deemed to be in current employment of the University. In addition, external examiners, former members of staff or persons who have previously been members of Approval Panels cannot be nominated unless it has been more than four years since their previous appointment. Panel members should not be from areas where UWS currently has colleagues acting as External Examiners within the specific subject/programme area under review. Retired professionals/academics cannot normally be considered after 12 months has elapsed since their employment in the subject/HE, unless exceptional circumstances exist and continuing practice within the sector can be evidenced.

Selection of Internal Panel Members
The internal panel members will usually include the following:

- An internal Chair who meets the criteria noted above;
- Two members of staff from outwith the School proposing the new programme, at least one of whom is an academic who has experience of programme development and/or leadership;
- A senior member of QuEST will be in attendance at all events.

Criteria for Programme Approval
The following criteria are drawn to the attention of Approval Panel members, Schools and drafting teams and will be explored during the event:

a) The programme team should understand the principles, philosophy and processes underpinning the programme. There should be evidence of external reference points having influenced the curriculum and, where appropriate, there should have been industrial/professional input in the drafting process and exploration of the likely demand for the programme. They should have thought through the intellectual development and the planned experience of a student taking the programme and they should have addressed the implications for direct entrants into the programme via RPL. The rationale for the future development of the programme should be clear.

b) The programme should be able to realise its educational aims and intended learning outcomes and meet the framework set out in the appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark Statements. Learning outcomes for each level and exit award proposed should be explicit.

c) The curriculum should be coherent, realistic and of comparable academic standard to similar programmes and awards of other UK Higher Education providers. The content of the programme should be relevant to its title and outcomes. There should be an appropriate balance between academic and practical elements. The sequence, level and progression of content should be appropriate and in line with the SCQF and appropriately articulated in programme and module learning outcomes at each level. The balance between the
depth and breadth of the curriculum should be appropriate to the award.

d) The programme should be suitable for a range of learners in addition to full-time students. Consideration should have been given to equality, diversity and inclusion matters. Programme Specifications and Module Descriptors should be complete and clear to their intended audiences.

e) The title and content of any exit awards including minor/joint specifications must be addressed by the panel and discussed in the report of the event. These should be in line with the SCQF and Chapter 1 of the University’s Regulatory Framework.

f) The intended methods of teaching, learning and assessment should be explicit, appropriate and effective.

g) Specification of the requirements that need to be met by prospective students to enable them to study must be clear e.g. Computer Hardware & Software Specifications.

h) The regulations regarding student admission, programme structure, progression, assessment and examination should be those of the University Regulatory Framework. Any deviations that are identified at scrutiny should be brought to the attention of the University Secretary. The scheme of assessment should make it possible to test the extent to which students have achieved level and programme outcomes.

i) The level of study proposed in the final stage of the programme should be appropriate in relation to the award to which it will lead. There should be distinct outcomes for single/major/joint and minor awards at all levels.

j) The facilities and resources should be sufficient to support the programme adequately and appropriate resource planning in place with any risks identified and addressed. Staff development and research should be ongoing at an appropriate level. Staff CVs/Pure profiles are included in approval documentation.

k) Learning and teaching strategies should be compliant with equal opportunities policies and promote a critical understanding of discrimination, diversity, ethics and other related concepts in the context of education and society.

l) There should be appropriate student support systems in place.

m) Clear mechanisms should be in place for the maintenance of the standard of the award(s) and the continuing enhancement of the quality of the students’ programme of study.

n) The objectives and integration of sandwich or other work-based learning or professional placement arrangements should be articulated.

o) How employability skills and graduate attributes, including the principles of Global Citizenship and PDP, are integrated into the
programme and how information on career opportunities is communicated to students should be included.

p) There should be clear systems in place to gather and respond to student feedback and for broader student engagement in learning, teaching and assessment.

q) Embedding of research skills and relevant underpinning should be evident across all programmes.

The extent to which particular issues will need emphasis will vary according to the event in question. The panel will also take cognisance of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education on Course Design and Development.

The panel has the authority to approve the proposal on behalf of Senate where the criteria for programme approval have been adequately addressed and to specify any conditions which require to be met before the programme can commence as well as any recommendations and observations to enhance the programme and the student experience. The panel is also invited to highlight elements of good practice.

Alternatively, the panel may reject the proposal if it has serious reservations about its structure, content, quality or standard. The Chair may request an adjournment of the programme approval process at any point during the proceedings if it looks unlikely that the panel will be able to reach a positive outcome.

Outcomes of the Approval Event

During the final private meeting of the panel, it is essential that the main points of agreement or disagreement are identified, and decisions reached about the future action required. Guidance is available from the senior QuEST panel member, if required. There are several possible decisions which the panel may agree on behalf of Senate:

- **Adjournment**: the Chair has authority to adjourn the event at any point during the day if the proposal is not of the standard or quality required to achieve approval but the panel has confidence that this can be rectified in the short-term and is willing to reconvene at a later date to consider a revised proposal;

- **Approval for a period not exceeding six years subject to University monitoring and review procedures**: thereafter the programme will normally be incorporated in the University's periodic Institution-Led Review which operates on a six-year cycle;

- **Conditional approval**: approval may be made conditional upon the fulfilment of certain requirements by a specified date. The panel should agree and specify how such conditions will be met. If however, there appears to be a large number of conditions emerging then the panel, directed by the Chair, should consider if the programme can be approved at this stage or if the event should be adjourned. This would be appropriate for example if more than **four conditions** appeared necessary;
• **Approval for a limited period:** exceptionally, the panel may decide that approval should be limited if there remain particular concerns that have not been fully satisfied by the programme team. In such cases the panel should make a recommendation on the process to achieve a full approval when the specified period is concluded. This decision is also appropriate for programmes jointly approved with professional bodies or for collaborative provision;

• **Refusal of approval:** approval may be refused if there is evidence that the programme does not meet minimum acceptable standards and the panel does not have confidence that this can be rectified in the short-term.

There will normally be "**Recommendations**" (which require a response from the School) and "**Observations**" attached to the report - these may highlight areas of good practice and/or be issues to draw to the attention of parts of the University outwith the programme team.

**Appeals against Approval Decisions**

If a drafting team wishes to contest a decision made by an Approval Panel it should first seek to resolve the issue at the level at which the decision was originally made by contacting the Head of Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST). The drafting team may escalate an appeal to EAC, the decision of EAC shall be final. An appeal to EAC should be regarded as a last resort.

**Conditions Relating to Programme Approval**

Chairs will summarise the approval conditions and recommendations upon which the panel have agreed: this will form the basis of the report of the event. Once these statements are agreed by the panel, they are communicated orally to the Programme Leader by the Chair at the conclusion of the event.

If conditional approval is given to a programme, Chairs are asked to establish the mechanisms and timescales by which the conditions are to be met:

- Where the documentation requires substantial revision, it is appropriate for the whole panel to approve the amendments;

- Where minor amendments are required to a programme, it is appropriate for the Chair, with or without other panel member(s), to approve the amendments;

- Where conditions have been set, the School is required to provide assurance that these have been satisfactorily addressed within the required timescale.

It is a requirement that programme teams address the conditions made at approval stage urgently and produce revised programme documentation if required by the deadline specified by the panel.
If conditions are not met by the deadline set by the panel, the programme may not commence.

**Procedures after the Event**

**Conclusions Memo**

The panel gives its conclusions and recommendations verbally at the end of the event and a conclusion memo is completed by the EQO – see template and circulated to the panel, programme team and School the day after the event to allow the team to start addressing any conditions or recommendations.

**The Report**

The EQO or nominee also compiles a detailed written report of the event outlining:

- The presentation by the School;
- Rationale for development and target audience;
- Confirmed programme structure and student journey;
- Confirmed title and delivery mode;
- The discussions which took place including the conclusions recommended by the panel;
- Outline any conditions and/or recommendations set by the panel & context.

Approval reports demonstrate the University’s public accountability for the standards achieved by their programmes. Peer groups’ academic judgements, and the evidence on which they are based, must be substantiated and accessible through reports.

**Approval of the Report**

- The draft report must be approved by the Chair of the Panel and checked by the Programme Leader for accuracy before circulation to all members of the panel. The panel’s comments are returned to the School for incorporation into the draft.

**Programme Leader Response to the Report**

- The Programme Leader is responsible for providing a brief response to the report on behalf of the drafting team and the School to address how conditions/recommendations have been/will be addressed, this will be attached to the report and confirmed by signature of Chair of panel.

- EAC may review any report and consider the Programme Leader response having reviewed the annual summary of programme approval outcomes report which is prepared by QuEST.

**Circulation of Approved Final Report**

- The approved report is circulated to the Programme Leader. The School also notifies Admissions / Student Recruitment, QuEST, Strategic Planning, Marketing & Communications, Finance, Banner and colleagues
in Registry that the programme(s) has/have been approved and conditions met and provides copies of revised materials if requested;

- The Divisional Programme Board should review the report in detail on behalf of the School Board and take forward and record longer term issues for enhancement;

- The first Programme Monitoring Report prepared following the approval event should address the issues in the report.

**Final Programme Documentation**

The University is required to have on file the documentation relating to each programme as it is currently being taught and administered.

One copy of the approved PDDP is required by QuEST. Copies of previous programme documents which relate to former versions of programmes will be stored for future reference on the PSMD catalogue.

**Student Handbook**

Following the approval event the Programme Leader will ensure a student handbook is drafted. Core text for this is provided by the Court & Senate Office.

**EAC and Senate Overview**

Annually QuEST will prepare a report for EAC and Senate providing an overview of recommendations and conditions to ensure Senate has a complete understanding of the approvals and the range of issues arising at approval events. Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments will use this information in taking forward staff development to support future approval of programmes.

**A Note of Programme Approvals Conducted Online**

It is recognised that given the recent pandemic, it may be unwise to conduct approval events face to face. During 2019/20 QuEST held several Institution-led Reviews and participated in online approvals. The following FAQ may come in useful for those planning similar events.

*What platform did you use?*

We used a combination of Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Zoom worked better where there were more attendees as you cannot see as many participants in Teams> Teams has the advantage of being integrated with Microsoft Office 365 and is good as a repository for sharing documentation.

*What worked well (from the institutional perspective, from the review-team perspective, from the participants’ perspective)?*

- Depending on the scheduling of your event, you may have time between initial review by the panel and the event to receive early feedback. This can be used by teams to prepare responses in advance of the event and to “bank” certain areas prior to the formal event if the panel are content that the response they had received had adequately addressed the area.
It can also be useful to survey students prior to the event to ensure that there is evidence of student participation should they be unable to attend the session. Front-loading the event facilitated time for more focused, in-depth discussions. It also meant that the evidence base for report writing is already captured and that some of the less academic conditions can potentially be avoided. (e.g. “update your programme spec to be specific regarding exit titles” can be fixed between the initial receipt of materials and the actual event). If you are considering stretching an approval event over several days, this approach could be adapted for your event.

- As part of our process, we do ask the review team to feedback on what worked and what didn’t.
  - They appreciated that we kept in touch throughout the process, particularly with the earlier events when it was unclear what was likely to happen with lockdown.
  - Use a strong Chair to keep the panel in line and focused.
  - Setting online etiquette is a must. It is well worth familiarising yourself with the guidance from the Court and Senate Office.
- Participants were able to use the chat facility to include further context to some of the topics.
- Student participation has been excellent at these events. It was also more balanced. When we do manage to get participation from students overseas, it often feels like those on the VC don’t get as much attention – this levelled that particular playing field.

**How did you adapt your original programme to suit it being online?**

- With the first event, the programme was very similar to a face to face event in terms of timings and areas for exploration. However, some meetings took less time than anticipated because much of the information was provided upfront.

**What have the outputs been like?**

- The format of the reports has been similar whilst acknowledging the change in delivery mode. And as above, fewer conditions related to documentation.

**What would you do differently the next time?**

- Two full days of VC is a lot of screen time, but two days together means that the issues are fresh in the minds of the panel. With the Career-Long Professional Education event, we have a gap of 10 days (Day 2 of phase 2 was on 18th June due to calendar conflicts). It did allow further opportunity for the team to provide additional documentation which can reduce the conditions attached to the programme and allow further opportunity to discuss areas for development and highlight positive practice. It also allowed an opportunity to tweak the Day 2 programme and focus more on certain pedagogical areas and invite additional participants.

**Did you have a protocol / set of house rules?**
Similar to typical house rules at face to face meetings and the guidance provided by Court and Senate Office. Once the panel have identified areas for exploration, it can be helpful for the Chair to ask a particular panel member to lead on an area. For larger events, it is similarly helpful if the question is directed to the programme lead and then they can recommend specific people to speak to the area. Ensure that all staff know how to either raise their hand physically, or using the emoticons in whatever platform is used. Zoom can be better for larger meetings as you can physically see everyone and see if someone is trying to raise a point. In Teams, it's not as easy to spot. Participants should be encouraged to use the chat to flag any further points and the administrator(s) can highlight these to the Chair to explore.

5 PROGRAMME APPROVAL FOR ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMMES

The normal approval procedures will apply to online learning programmes in terms of new programme proposal requirements, guidance and submission paperwork which are addressed above in this handbook. Programme Leaders will be expected to follow the timescales for submitting external panel member nominations, submitting documentation etc. The EQO or nominee will be responsible for organising the internal panel, and preparing the report.

Approval issues specific to online learning to be addressed are noted below:

Online Learning Programme Development

1 Before any online learning programme is developed, consultation should take place between the drafting team, Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments and ITDS to test the viability, scope and necessary development investment relevant to the proposed programme.

2 If the proposal is considered viable, the School should process the proposal via the usual new programme proposal procedures. The Portfolio Advisory Group should also be advised of the proposed new mode of delivery for the programme even if the proposal is to deliver an existing programme via online delivery. The development and ongoing support activities do require to be fully costed.

   There should be clarification on whether:
   
   - there will only, or mainly, be the use of online learning materials;
   - communication and academic support of students is to be wholly, or mainly, online;
   - the support of a local agent is to be used for students to access resources, academic support or administrative functions.

3 Learning Transformation, Innovation and Environments can provide advice and guidance on online learning and the use of Aula and Mahara. The
production of programme materials and student handbooks is the responsibility of the drafting team and the School.

4 The team is asked to take cognisance of the relevant expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and provide a clear commentary within the PDDP.

**Quality Assurance**

The principles for the quality assurance of online learning programmes are identical to those covering the planning, development and approval of all other taught programmes at UWS.

**UK Quality Code for Higher Education**

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education should be used by all developers of online learning programmes.

This should include comment on the following:

- Arrangements for learner support, academic guidance, online tutoring and supervision of any research element;
- Resources to support the programme including how online learning students will access them;
- Specification of the requirements that need to be met by prospective students to enable them to study e.g. Computer Hardware & Software Specifications.

**Approval Panel for Online Learning Programme**

The membership of the panel, unless otherwise recommended at the earlier stages of the approval process, will be the same as specified in section 4 of this handbook, with the additional proviso that there should be at least one external academic panel member from another UK Higher Education Provider experienced in the operation of an online learning programme, normally, in an area cognate to the proposed programme.

**Additional Materials**

Before the event the external panel members will receive the documentation (Programme Specification, PDDP and Module Descriptors). The panel members should also be enrolled onto the VLE to establish an understanding of the facilities students will be able to access should the programme be approved. The team should have at least one fully developed online module available for the panel to review to be able use as an example of the approach being taken to the teaching, learning and assessment, and student support. This will enable the panel to confirm the appropriateness of the approach being taken for this online programme and to protect and enhance the student experience. Where an online route is being developed from an existing blended or fully face to face programme that is already approved, the panel would need clear evidence of how the team have ensured equivalence of experience, access to resources, and learning and assessment methods.
The drafting team and School should also have prepared a plan with clearly identified timescales for the preparation of the programme materials to ensure that the materials are ready in time for the programme to commence and, where possible, have exemplar materials for the panel to review. The panel may also decide as a condition of approval that the final materials are circulated to all members of the panel to review.

The Event

The event will follow the usual University format for the approval/review of programmes but should also include a demonstration of the VLE for the panel, especially for any members of the panel who have little or no previous experience of working with a VLE. It is the responsibility of the drafting team to facilitate this demonstration.

Outcomes of the Event

The outcomes for an event of an online learning programme are the same as those for any blended/face to face taught programme.

6 POSTAL APPROVAL (Modules & Programmes)

There are occasions where it may be appropriate to undertake a postal approval rather than an event-based approval. This type of approval typically requires the current external examiner to review the revised or refreshed module(s) / programme and complete a postal approval report (template available from QuEST). The School are responsible for paying the external a set fee of £150.00 (subject to tax and NI) for completing the postal approval report. There are a number of scenarios where a postal approval may be the most efficient and effective approach – please note this list is not exhaustive:

- When the team wish to make a change to a programme that is more significant than that permitted through the amendment process and the programme has recently been subject to an ILR;
- Where the programme team wish to change a small number of core modules associated with the requirements for award but where the programme learning outcomes are not significantly affected;
- Where the team wish to add in an additional bracket or named specialism to an existing programme framework (NB: if this specialism is a new area for the University, a full event may be required);
- Where the team wish to make a number of changes to a suite of cognate modules due to professional body or accreditation requirements.

Please consult with colleagues in QuEST to explore other options where a postal event may be appropriate.
Process for Postal Approval

Once it has been agreed to review and refresh the programme/module(s) the programme leader/module co-ordinator should consult with their EQO and QuEST to determine if a postal approval event is appropriate. The EQO will review the postal approval template in consultation with QuEST and adjust the content to ensure the focus of the reporting is targeted as appropriate before sending to the external approver. The external approver may be an existing external examiner or an external academic subject expert.

The programme leader/module co-ordinator will identify the relevant external examiner and the EQO will send an invitation (template letter available) to ascertain if the external would be willing to support a postal approval. If the external agrees to undertake the review they should be sent a copy of the documentation and given a deadline for submitting the completed postal approval report template. The EQO should be identified as the first contact for the external to speak to should they require any further support or information. Once the report has been received and any subsequent required action has been undertaken to the external’s satisfaction, the completed form should be sent to the Head of QuEST who will confirm approval. (As there is no Chair for postal approval, QuEST has been identified as appropriate to endorse University sign-off). Thereafter, the EQO will raise the fee for the external. The postal approval event has the same status as an approval report from an event and should be reviewed by the School Board and considered at annual monitoring. The postal report should be retained by the School. QuEST will seek to retain a copy to for their records.

Documentation for a Postal Event

Depending on the changes being considered by the postal approval event the documentation may vary. As the external will wish to understand the changes that are being proposed, the following material will be required:

- Current approved version of the module descriptors/programme specification;
- Revised version of module descriptor (s)/programme specification;
- Overview document outlining the rationale for the change;
- Tailored postal approval template (available from EQO/QuEST);
- **Postal Approval Briefing Note**

Additional material such as PSRB approval requirements, outcomes of ILRs or Divisional Programme Board minutes may also help support the proposal.

Please contact QuEST if you have any questions or queries regarding postal approval.

A summary of the postal approval process has been illustrated in a flowchart overleaf.

**Honorarium Fee:**

External Panel members are eligible to receive an honorarium fee for their participation in an academic approval event, a collaborative approval event and reviews. This approach has been introduced from session 2022/23 onwards. Details are available in Appendix 1.
Scenarios where postal approval may be most efficient approach:
- Programme change that is more significant than permitted through annual amendment process;
- Changes to small number of core modules but where LOs are not significantly affected;
- Addition of a bracketed or named specialism to existing framework;
- Changes to a suite of cognate modules due to PSRB or accreditation requirements;
- CF alignments revisions;
- Others as appropriate.

Postal Approval agreed as appropriate

Postal Approval: Programme Approval Report
7 APPROVAL OF WORK-BASED LEARNING CREDIT BEARING PROVISION

In line with the Learning and Teaching Thematic Plan, approval panels will explore with drafting teams how they are recording and supporting work-based learning and placement opportunities within their programmes for all students whether in the UK or abroad.

The University recognises a range of work-based and placement learning – the University procedure should be reviewed and adhered to.

8 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SHORT COURSES (NON-CREDIT BEARING) AND EXTERNAL ACCREDITATION

Short courses are defined as non-credit bearing and which do not lead to a University award.

Approval of Short Courses

The School Board will be responsible for the approval and monitoring of any short courses within their portfolio, i.e. those covered by the SCQF.

The School Board will establish mechanisms for the approval of such courses. Approval by the School Board will normally be sufficient unless the short course leads to a University award, in which case, it will be subject to the normal University approval process.

Annual Monitoring of Short Courses

School Boards are responsible for the annual monitoring of any short courses within their portfolio including those which do not lead to a SCQF award of the University.

School Boards should decide what method of annual monitoring is most appropriate for each short course and to confirm the ongoing quality of provision in the learning and teaching. Consideration of any short courses should form part of the Divisional Programme Board annual monitoring processes. There may also be additional annual monitoring requirements as determined by professional bodies.

NMC Approved Short Courses

Such cases must be jointly approved by the University and NMC requirements. Normally a representative from EAC will represent the University at these joint approval events.

9 PROGRAMME CLOSURE / WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PORTFOLIO

When a School wishes to close a programme for whatever reason the following procedure will normally apply:

a) The School Board prepares a report outlining the following:
   - Rationale for closure;
- Proposed date for closure;
- Arrangements for students currently on the programme – at all levels of the award and campuses/sites of delivery/students on suspension/students enrolled as resit only;
- Consideration of part-time/direct entry students;
- Impact of closure on other provision within the School/other Schools;
- Any potential Equality Impact should be considered through the agreed procedure;
- Implications on staffing resources;
- Professional Body Associations that may need to be informed of the closure;
- External Examiner appointments which may need to be terminated early (or may need to be extended for resits of last cohort);
- Explanation of transitional arrangements, particularly for part time students and proposals for ongoing resit/reassessment needs.

b) The School will then submit the report to Portfolio Advisory Group which will make a recommendation to EAC on programme closure. EAC will report this recommendation to Senate.

c) Once EAC has approved the closure of the programme, the School should undertake a formal consultation with all affected students highlighting the options they have in terms of completing the programme or transferring to other awards if they desire. Transitional arrangements for part-time students or students who receive a resit decision in the final year of operation should be discussed. The written agreement of students wishing to transfer to another programme should be obtained. All students currently enrolled on the programme should have the opportunity to exit with the award. The School should inform Admissions that the award is being withdrawn; they will then inform UCAS. The Admissions Office will also produce letters for students offering alternative programmes.

d) The School should then inform Recruitment / Admissions, Strategic Planning, Information Technology, Registry and QuEST that the programme is being withdrawn from the portfolio and that there will be no new recruitment to the award. The School should outline when the programme will finally be withdrawn from the portfolio and programmes having taken into account part-time student completion times and any resit/re-assessment issues.

10 PROGRAMME AMENDMENTS

Amendments to existing Programme of Study
Divisional Programme Boards are responsible for agreeing changes to programmes on behalf of the School. At the beginning of each session, Schools should review the PSMD Catalogue.

When processing programme amendments, the following should be noted:

- A Programme Amendment Form should be completed. Schools should retain completed forms;

- All programme amendments must be considered and approved by the Divisional Programme Board with current responsibility for the programme. It is recommended that programme amendments are considered annually by the Divisional Programme Board, usually in March;

- The EQO must be consulted regarding all proposed programme amendments. It is recommended that consultation with the EQO takes place prior to the Divisional Programme Board where approval of the programme amendment is being sought to allow any quality assurance matters and regulatory matters to be highlighted and resolved in advance;

- Consultation with External Examiners to the modules / programme(s) should form part of the process for all programme amendments;

- Any change to programme title, structure, significant content or assessment regulations, which will affect progressing students, will require formal consultation with affected students and an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out;

- In cases where the programme structure and requirements are to be amended, module co-ordinators for modules involved in the changes (i.e. modules to be removed or added, modules to alter core/option status change to learning outcomes) must be consulted. Other affected Divisional Programme Boards must also be consulted in these instances;

- Consultation with the School Board and QuEST is necessary where proposed changes will result in more than one core module at each level of the programme being amended or replaced. The impact on the programme specification must be addressed when modules are amended or replaced. Any greater volume of change to modules, level outcomes or programmes will require a full re-approval event.

- When a change to an existing programme title is proposed, the Portfolio Advisory Group must be consulted

- Following approval of all programme amendments, revised programme specification(s) must also be lodged on the PSMD Catalogue for reference purposes;
- Relevant Professional Services (e.g. Strategic Planning, QuEST, Registry, Marketing & Communications and Student Recruitment / Admissions) will thereafter be notified of any pertinent changes.

- It is imperative that programme changes are cognisant of the [Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers](https://www.competitionsandmarketsauthority.org.uk). Those seeking to make changes to programmes are directed to the [Material Changes guidance](https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/uws-commitments/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-diversity-inclusion-at-uws/) provided by UWS Legal Services.

**Proposed Programme Changes**

The procedure for amendments to programmes as described indicates that Divisional Programme Boards are responsible for agreeing changes to programmes on behalf of the School and must complete a Programme Amendment Form. However, where significant changes to an existing programme are being proposed such as more than one core module being changed per level, changes to the title, philosophy, content or learning outcomes - or the addition of new modes of delivery such as significant online learning or WBL elements, or addition of an Honours Level - it is likely to be appropriate to formally review the programme via a re-approval event. Due to the prominence of the UWS Strategy and the desire to maximise honours provision, these maybe classed as new titles and require New Programme Proposals to be completed.

**New UWS Campus/Mode of Delivery**

Where a School wishes to offer existing provision at another campus or via a new mode of delivery, programme leaders must consult with key partners across the institution, students, external examiners and PSRBs where required. A form has been created to support this activity which removes the requirement to undertake a formal approval event.

The “**Additional Delivery Form – campus/mode**” can be found on Sharepoint. The form should be completed by the programme leader and signed off by the School Board and confirms that all relevant steps have been completed and all affected stakeholders have been consulted. This removes the requirement to undertake a formal approval event.

If the approval of additional campus(es) results in the withdrawal from another campus(es) this needs to be addressed separately to ensure that the students’ rights under **consumer law** are protected and to confirm the appropriate support and transition arrangements have been developed. An Equality Impact Assessment will be necessary. Please see [https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/uws-commitments/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-diversity-inclusion-at-uws/](https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/uws-commitments/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-diversity-inclusion-at-uws/) for further details.

If Tier 4 students (non-EEA) are to be taught on additional campus(es) it is **essential** that consultation with the UWS UKVI Key Contact and Compliance Officer has been conducted before teaching commences. All new teaching sites for Tier 4 students **must** be registered in advance with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

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1 Currently Alison Devlin
Once the additional campus/route for delivery has been approved by the School Board, the programme leader is responsible for updates of all relevant documentation and materials such as the programme specification, module descriptors, student handbooks and VLE sites. The programme leader is also responsible for advising Registry, Marketing and Recruitment, IT, Strategic Planning, affected students and the relevant external examiner of the approved changes.

**Blended Learning, Face to Face and Online Approval**

Programme leaders should follow the standard programme amendment process for the additional of a blended learning route to an approved face to face or online programme. However, for the creation of a wholly online or wholly face to face route for an approved programme, an internal approval event will typically be required to consider the learning and teaching approaches, assessment methods, supporting resources and the student journey and experience.

**Change to Existing Programme Titles**

Where a new programme title is proposed for an existing programme, EAC approval (on behalf of Senate) will be required due to potential resource and strategic planning implications even if the award comprises all or mostly existing modules. Ultimately Senate must ensure it has an overview of the University’s portfolio of awards.

In such instances, submission of a Programme Amendment Form approved by the Divisional Programme Board and School Board, comprising rationale in support of the proposal is required for submission to the Portfolio Advisory Group for consideration. The group will then make a formal recommendation to EAC. A draft of the updated Programme Specification should also be submitted with this form.

**Programme Specification and Module Descriptor (PSMD) Catalogue and Ownership of Material**

The source for published version of programme specifications will be the PSMD Catalogue.

Ownership of the definitive electronic version of material lodged on the PSMD Catalogue will be retained by the School.

**11 APPROVAL OF NEW MODULES/MODULE AMENDMENT**

It is imperative that module changes are cognisant of the Competitions and Markets Authority guidance to HE providers. Those seeking to make changes to programmes are directed to the Material Changes guidance provided by UWS Legal Services.
Module Amendment Process

At the start of each academic session, the Module Structure Database Administrator\(^2\) will provide Schools with a module spreadsheet for consideration. The spreadsheet of modules is submitted to the Divisional Programme Board for consideration during the academic session by the School Executive Manager. Any module amendments are recorded on the spreadsheet (including a description of the change being made) and noted in the Divisional Programme Board minutes. The responsibility for the approval and recording of module amendments remain with the relevant Divisional Programme Board.

Module amendments should be clearly articulated in the spreadsheet and captured in the Divisional Programme Board minutes and then formally noted on the Module Review forms which are completed on an annual basis as part of the annual monitoring cycle.

The EQO / nominee should check the list of amendments against the reporting in PSMD to establish accuracy.

Major/Minor Amendments to Modules

For minor module amendments (i.e. updating of reading lists or a change to module moderator), no additional detail would be required in the Divisional Programme Board minutes, but for major changes (see below), a rationale should be noted in the minutes to capture the deliberate steps being taken to enhance the student experience as part of the subject development:

- Change of Divisional Programme Board;
- Module title;
- Credit level of the module;
- Credit points of the module;
- Methods of assessment/weighting of assessment;
- Learning outcomes.

Major changes to LTA approaches or learning outcomes should involve consultation with the relevant External Examiner and other appropriate stakeholders e.g. students and regulatory bodies. An Equality Impact Assessment may also be appropriate. Where substantial changes are made to an existing module, it is essential to modify the title of the module and obtain a new module code.

**N.B.** These amendments may be made locally within the School; however it should be highlighted that such changes will therefore **not** be reflected on the PSMD Catalogue until the next formal update.

External Examiner Module Allocation

If the School wish to make changes to the allocation of an external examiner or add an external examiner to a new module, this must go through the approved process and the appropriate reallocation form should be submitted to QuEST.

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\(^2\) Currently Emma Munday
New Module Approval & Module Amendment Guidance

The procedures below take full cognisance of the University’s commitment to quality assurance and enhancement and that the approval process ensures that the credit level of new modules is given appropriate consideration in line with SCQF.

New modules should be created directly on the PSMD Catalogue instead of using the old Module Descriptor template. The approval and quality assurance procedures for new modules/amendments will remain the same. If you have any questions or queries about using PSMD with regards to the new module creation on the PSMD Catalogue, please contact your EQO in the first instance. There is also guidance available from ITDS to assist in using PSMD.

1. Before the start of each session, the Module Structure Database Administrator will supply each School with a spreadsheet summarising the modules approved for delivery in the forthcoming academic session. This master spreadsheet will be a list of all approved modules together with information about the School Assessment Board and Divisional Programme Board to which they are attached and the date they were last amended.

2. In September, the School will confirm the allocation of Divisional Programme Boards and School Assessment Board Panels to the modules as being correct for the forthcoming session.

3. During the period from September to February, Schools will amend the spreadsheet to update the status of modules for the forthcoming academic session. The spreadsheet will record module descriptors which remained unchanged, those with amendments and those to be deleted. New modules will be added.

4. For module amendments the spreadsheet will specify the changes made. The School should check the spreadsheet for accuracy against the reports available in PSMD.

5. Approval for new modules and amendments to existing modules will be the responsibility of the Divisional Programme Board. The Divisional Programme Board Chair’s signature will confirm module additions and amendments. Where new modules are proposed as part of an approval programme, the panel acts as the external input to the process. However these should first be processed through the Divisional Programme Board in the same way as all other new modules and module amendments.

6. Input by external advisers and students is a key component in the approval of new modules or major amendments.

7. When the Divisional Programme Board has approved new modules and amendments, the overall spreadsheet will be signed off by the School Board. In particular, new modules should be brought to the attention of School Board.
New and updated material should be lodged onto the PSMD Catalogue. Any withdrawn modules should be removed and archived appropriately within the PSMD Catalogue. This task should be undertaken by the designated School Administrator(s).

The completed spreadsheet will be returned to the Module Structure Database Administrator, who will access relevant new and amended module descriptors from the PSMD Catalogue.

The deadline for submission of the School module spreadsheets and updating module descriptors on the PSMD Catalogue will be **31 March**.

The allocation of module codes is the responsibility of the Module Structure Database Administrator.

Where modules (new or amended) will lead to a change greater than one core module being amended or removed per level, this must be flagged to the EQO as a formal re-approval may be required.

Ownership of the definitive electronic version of material lodged on the PSMD Catalogue will be retained by the School.

**Timescales for Approval**

In order to ensure modules are confirmed for the following session, approval of all new and amended modules must take place by **31 March annually**.
EQO sends the module spreadsheet to the Divisional Board Chairs at the start of the session for review. September/October

The spreadsheet is updated at the Divisional Board during the academic session. Divisional Board minutes note the changes and where appropriate the rationale for the changes being made. Any major amendments or new modules must follow appropriate approval process.

The updated spreadsheet is signed off by the Divisional Board and submitted to the School Board. The revised descriptors will be added onto the PSMD Catalogue. February/March

Module amendments are noted on the Module Review form by the Module Coordinator.

Module spreadsheet is reviewed by the School Board and returned to the Module Structure Database Administrator (MSDA) in Registry. The MSDA will allocate module codes by 31 March.

The Module Structure Database Administrator circulates the approved version of the module spreadsheet to School to make any amendments for the following session. September / October
12 PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

Professional accreditation is the official recognition awarded by a PSRB as a result of the University meeting specific standards or criteria. Alongside University approved programmes, the aim of professional accreditation is to secure for students a high quality of academic and professional experience and also to provide enhanced opportunities for graduates entering their chosen profession, either through confirmation of fitness to practice exemption from professional examinations or fast-tracking towards chartered or similar status.

Agencies such as SFC annually request information regarding programmes that have been accredited by professional bodies and the issues raised. This information is also relevant to ILR and annual monitoring. Details of accredited programmes therefore need to be held by Schools.

The development and drafting of documents for submission to PSRBs (both before and after accreditation visits) is the responsibility of the School.

Responsibility of the School

The responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the process of professional accreditation lies with the School. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that the accreditation documents meet the requirements outlined in the Key stages flowchart, in conjunction with the quality and standards and the deadlines prescribed by the PSRB.

As part of the School Board remit for overseeing and developing its portfolio of programmes, information on all programme accreditations by PSRBs is normally reviewed early in the academic session. The School will use this information to maintain the School-wide data on professional accreditation and the calendar of visits to inform the SFC response.

For existing programmes, Schools should be aware of when accreditations expire as they are responsible for ensuring programmes remain accredited. Schools are responsible for making all arrangements concerned with accreditation and to ensure that the stages of accreditation have been followed.

Responsibility of the Programme Leader

The Programme Leader (or Programme Leader designate for new programmes) will normally take the lead in the preparation of accreditation documentation, for correspondence with the PSRB and for making the arrangements for an accreditation visit where necessary. Where it is hoped to incorporate the professional accreditation with the initial or re-approval, this should be flagged in the New Programme Proposals form. The Programme Leader is responsible for keeping the School Board and the Divisional Programme Board informed of all PSRB activity.
Care should be taken to ensure that the appropriate documents take into consideration the range of issues to be addressed in submission documents and address recommendations made during the accreditation.

**Responsibility of Deputy Dean**

The Deputy Dean will be advised by the programme leader of all matters relating to professional accreditation and will ensure appropriate monitoring in line with the University's annual monitoring system.

The Deputy Dean will inform and advise the School Board on issues arising from PSRB visits and reports as appropriate.

**Responsibility of the Divisional Programme Board**

Divisional Programme Boards are the bodies responsible for monitoring programmes. Divisional Programme Boards will have an oversight of matters relating to and arising from professional accreditation activities and reports and will comment on such in the annual Programme Monitoring Report (formerly Programme Annual Report).

**Responsibility of the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QuEST)**

QuEST has an advisory role in relation to professional accreditation. The Team is able to offer guidance on University Regulations, quality assurance and enhancement approaches and, can attend the accreditation event in an advisory capacity, if required.

**Responsibility of the School Education and Quality Officer (EQO)**

The EQO can comment on both the draft accreditation document in terms of any reference to regulations and quality provided, and the draft School response to the report as outlined in the key stages below.

The EQO will also seek information from colleagues in the Schools on the schedule of forthcoming accreditation visits. This information will be used to collate the annual SFC response (September) and ensure EAC is kept informed of issues raised by PSRBs.

**Responsibility of School Board**

The School Board has oversight of professional accreditation and will sign off the final version of the accreditation documentation prior to it being sent to the PSRB. EAC will maintain an overview of matters raised and any issues for ILR and staff development.

**Details of Professional Accredited Provision at UWS**

The School is responsible for maintaining a schedule of accreditation status for all relevant awards and for providing this information annually to QuEST as required for the Annual report to the Scottish Funding Council. This facilitates not only the tracking of accreditations due, but also the monitoring of existing accreditations, and
a University-wide understanding of the issues being raised by professional accrediting panels.

PSRB reports provide valuable feedback on the quality of the University’s provision which can usefully be shared more widely.

**Professional Accreditation Processes**

There are a range of accreditation arrangements offered by PSRBs. For certain programmes the accreditation process involves a formal visit to the University while for other programmes the arrangements are less formal and can be updated by post. EAC has agreed the importance of the University being able to track all accreditation activities.

EQO will liaise with the Deputy Dean at the end of each academic year to confirm the professional visits due to take place in the following session, together with any new proposed professional accreditations. The first School Board of the session should consider the list of professional accreditations for the year ahead.

The EQO or nominee will support the development of milestones for submission of paperwork to the PSRB, incorporating the required review of draft documentation and final sign off by School Board. Programme accreditations should be clearly flagged to the first meeting of School Board and QuEST each session.
## KEY STAGES FOR APPROVAL/REAPPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

| School Board to review existing/new accreditations and notify QuEST |
| School agree Milestones towards accreditation |

### Existing vs New

- If accreditation is scheduled for renewal, Programme Leaders will produce completed accreditation documents
- New accreditation applications will be completed by Programme Leaders (designate)/School.

| QuEST to comment on draft accreditation document |
| Finalised accreditation document will be signed off by the School Board |
| Document submitted by School to PSRB |
| Accreditation visit/postal review takes place |

### REPORT OF FINDINGS RECEIVED FROM PSRB

| School Response Required | No Response Required |
| School Response progressed through School Board and forwarded to PSRB |
| Confirmation of Accreditation forwarded to School Board |
| School maintains calendar of future accreditations |
| Summary of outcomes of PSRB reports provided to SFC (Sept), EAC, Senate and Court |

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Professional Accreditation Document

The EQO should be asked to comment on the draft documentation before its submission to the PSRB and can consult with colleagues in QuEST if necessary. Once agreement is reached, School Board will sign off the documentation. The School will then be responsible for submitting the documentation to the PSRB.

Professional Accreditation Event

Arrangements for the accreditation visit will be managed by the School in consultation with the PSRB. The EQO can attend such events if required to advise the panel on quality and enhancement arrangements. However, in all cases, Schools are asked to advise QuEST of the dates of all accreditation events on request.

Professional Accreditation Responses

Following the accreditation process, the School will be responsible for authoring a response (if appropriate) to the PSRB report. School responses to the accreditation/PSRB report should be progressed through School Board before the final version is forwarded to the PSRB. School Board will receive both the final report/correspondence from the PSRB and the agreed School response.
External Panel Members ‘Approvers’ Honorarium fee structure

Honorarium fee structure for School Academic Approval Events, Collaborative Approval Events and Reviews

This Honorarium fee structure applies to Academic Approval Events or Reviews for all Programmes that lead to an award of the University (including collaborative), or renewal of an award. This encompasses all home (UWS-based).

External Panel Members are paid a single £150 fee for full participation and input into the event.

In summary:
- Full honorarium fee of £150 per event
- Tax will be deducted
- The type or approval event/review will determine whom shall hold responsibility for processing and coordinating payment (see budget holders).
- For new programme proposals (NPPs), Finance will embed such costings into financial guidance.

Right to Work

In line with Home Office and UKVI requirements, External Panel Members need to provide evidence to confirm their eligibility to work in the UK; this is a requirement for honorarium payment. Normally Passports and/or valid Birth Certificate together with evidence of National Insurance eligibility will be required to participate, however details of the acceptable forms of evidence can be found on the Home Office website. Further information on the University’s right to work checking processes can be provided by People and Organisational Development. Panel members will be entitled to receive their honorarium fee in accordance to their attendance – whether correspondence (preparation fee) or physical attendance.

Expenses

In addition to the fee detailed above for Academic Approval Events events/Reviews, External Panel Members that attend a physical event will be reimbursed for any reasonable expenses incurred in connection with their duties. Such expenses may be incurred for travel, subsistence, accommodation or any other purpose agreed by the budget holder and which accords with the University’s Financial Regulations.

Postal Approvals

There are occasions where it may be appropriate to undertake a postal approval rather than an event-based approval. The School is responsible for paying the ‘external approver’ a set fee of £150.00 (subject to tax and NI) for completing the postal approval report.

Budget Holders

In very exceptional circumstances, there is discretion to alter the fee. Advice may be sought from the QuEST in these cases but it will related to which budget the honorarium is covered by.

- For School Approval events, the honorarium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).
- For School Validated Approval events/reviews, the honorarium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).
- For School Franchise Collaborative Approval events/reviews, the honorarium fee shall be covered by QuEST.
- For Postal Approvals, the honorium fee shall be covered by the respective School(s).